



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**REMARKS BY H.E. DR. WILLIAM SAMOEI RUTO,
CGH, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA
AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE
FORCES, DURING THE AWARD OF CHARTER TO
UZIMA UNIVERSITY**

MAY 8, 2025

STATE HOUSE, NAIROBI

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. We have gathered here today to mark yet another significant milestone, not only for Uzima University but also in our relentless pursuit of equitable, high-quality, accessible, and transformative higher education in Kenya.
2. Uzima University now becomes the 30th accredited private university in Kenya, an achievement that underscores your commitment to academic excellence, institutional integrity, and service to society. I commend the leadership, faculty, staff, students, and partners whose collective efforts have brought us to this day.
3. I recognise the journey the institution has taken to reach this moment. In March 2020, you received interim authority from the Commission for University Education, transitioning from a constituent college of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa to an independent institution.
4. This achievement reflects the university's commitment to academic excellence and institutional growth. I am particularly pleased to note that Uzima's medical school, with the support of the Commission for University Education and the Kenya Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists and Dentists Council, is now accredited at the East African Community level. Congratulations on this remarkable milestone.
5. As we celebrate this important day, we must pay special tribute to the visionary founder and first Chancellor of Uzima University, Archbishop Emeritus Zaccheus Okoth. It was his deep commitment to improving healthcare and education in Western Kenya that led to the establishment of this institution.



Through his foresight, Uzima was conceived not just as a centre of learning, but as a mission to produce competent, ethical, and compassionate health professionals who serve with a sense of purpose. Your legacy will forever be etched in the lives of the many students, patients, and communities touched by Uzima's work.

6. The award of this charter aligns with our long-term goal of expanding access to quality university education. As a government, we recognise that our aspirations for inclusive development and equitable wealth creation are anchored in a strong education sector, which is essential for developing the required human capital and fostering research and innovation.
7. This is why we pursued bold, creative, and targeted reforms in the education sector, aimed at expanding access, reforming curricula, addressing funding challenges, improving infrastructure, and enhancing the quality of teaching, learning and research.
8. Over the past two-and-a-half years, we have implemented a student-centred higher education funding model to ensure that every learner, regardless of their background, gender, or economic status, has a fair opportunity to pursue their academic ambitions.
9. In the current financial year (2024/2025), the Higher Education Loans Board received over 700,000 applications from university and TVET learners. By 31st March 2025, the Board had disbursed KSh34 billion in tuition and upkeep loans, directly benefiting over 400,000 university students and 227,000 TVET trainees nationwide. The total financial support awarded so far stands at KSh47.26 billion.



I want to assure all learners, parents, and institutions that the government remains fully committed to ensuring complete disbursement of funds within the current financial year.

10. This new funding model has resolved the longstanding challenge of chronic underfunding that had pushed many public universities to the brink of bankruptcy. Today, these institutions are on a path to financial recovery and are expected to clear their debts in the coming years.
11. Uzima University's growth fits perfectly within our national objective to widen access to quality university education. Currently, over 149,000 students are enrolled in private universities, 49% female and 51% male, demonstrating growing gender balance in line with our constitutional values. Encouragingly, nearly half (70,587) of these students are enrolled in STEM programmes, which are vital to the success of our Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda.
12. Uzima's range of programmes, including medicine, clinical medicine, nursing, microbiology, and health systems management, reflects the institution's dedication to health sciences and national needs. The university has also cultivated strong partnerships locally and globally, which extend beyond lecture halls and ensure its students benefit from a vibrant ecosystem of research, innovation, and practical training.
13. Your collaboration with Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Teaching and Referral Hospital and six county governments, including Kisumu, Vihiga, Siaya, Homa Bay, Bungoma, and Kakamega, has enhanced clinical placements, providing your students with practical, high-quality, and locally relevant training.



To further strengthen this initiative, the government will provide a grant of Kshs 100 million to Uzima University to support and expand these collaborative efforts.

14. Internationally, I applaud Uzima's collaboration with Kenya Nurse and REMAR Nurse, which enables your graduates to sit for the National Council Licensure Examination and other international exams, opening global opportunities in countries such as the USA and Australia.
15. I am particularly inspired by the story of Dr. Hezron Omondi Omollo, Uzima's first medical student, who now leads the Division of Professional Standards and Human Resources for Health at the Ministry of Health. His success reflects the kind of legacy this university is building, and one that we are here to celebrate, sustain, and elevate.
16. I challenge Uzima University to continue living the philosophy behind its name, Uzima, meaning '*fullness of life.*' Let this institution continue nurturing healthcare professionals who serve with both competence and conscience, especially in underserved communities.
17. To the leadership, faculty, staff, students, and partners of Uzima University, congratulations. May you continue to serve with courage, compassion, and curiosity and shine as a beacon of excellence in health sciences, not just for Kenya and Africa, but for the world.

I thank you.

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